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WAFFLE ~ A TEST CASE FOR THE DISCUSSION OF CANADIAN NATIONALISM

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In *90 Years of the Communist Manifesto* Trotsky wrote, "Program and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light of experience, which is the supreme criteria of human reason."

The present discussion has produced at least two distinct and opposing positions on the question of the orientation of our movement to Canadian nationalism and to what we believe to be the core of Canadian nationalism — opposition to U.S. big business domination of Canada. These two positions stand directly opposed to each other on the question of the validity of the 1968 document on Canada-U.S. relations which was adopted by the League in convention *(See W2-1968 --ed.)*

One position is expressed in the Political Committee majority document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.* It states, "The question of Canada-U.S. relations and the influence of Canadian nationalism has confused and disoriented almost the entire Canadian left."

In the next paragraph it continues, "Before the revolutionary vanguard lie educational tasks of major proportions. A persistent and relentless campaign of educational propaganda must be carried to resist and turn back the influence of Canadian nationalism in the working class and left wing movements."

The document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* is unmistakably opposed to the central line of the 1968 document on Canada-U.S. relations. On page 25 it states, "As the reactionary sides of anti-U.S. feeling became apparent, a search was launched for a better definition of the 'anti-imperialist sentiment' which would exclude reactionary nationalist manifestations, and nonetheless remain an identifiable phenomena 'with an anti-capitalist thrust'... It (the 1968 resolution on Canada-U.S. relations) offered only a concept of sensitive orientation to an ill-defined sentiment — an orientation that was to prove sterile and misdirected."

In addition the document warns that "the ruling class grasps increasingly to nationalism as a weapon of self defense: to mobilize support for bourgeois confederation, (against the Québécois and other oppressed nationalities) and promote class collaboration. It is quick to tip its hat to the'struggle for Canadian independence from the U.S.'"

Its authors are concerned that the "confused and disoriented" Canadian left will abandon the struggles of the Québécois. In addition, the document says: "The fascist form of nationalism has been seen as yet only in embryonic form in Canada — the main reason why so much of the left has embraced Canadian nationalism with such light-minded irresponsibility. "

We have quoted the document *Canada and the Crisis of World imperialism* to clearly establish its position. It is fair to say that the document rejects all forms of Canadian nationalism as reactionary. It sees no basis for a progressive opposition to U.S. domination of Canadian society or for an anti-imperialist sentiment "with an anti-capitalist thrust." It declares that the entire Canadian left has become disoriented and confused around this question and that it is diverting people away from class consciousness, toward collaboration with the Canadian bourgeoisie, toward acceptance of the Canadian state, and away from a principled defense of the right of the Québécois to self-determination. Furthermore, the left is acting in an irresponsible manner given the danger of fascism that Canadian nationalism poses.

Based on these observations and conclusions, the document projects a broad-ranging, anti-nationalist campaign by our forces within the left as a whole, and within working class organizations. This orientation is being presented to the next convention of our movement for adoption.

How could the **entire** radical left, including key and large sections of the trade unionsmovement, reaching deep into the rank and file, become so disoriented, so confused on the question of nationalism — so much so that it is turning away from class politics -- at the same time as the radicalization continues to grow and display a more and more anti-capitalist character? These questions, clearly posed by its authors, are left unaswered by the document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.*

Do its authors believe that the radicalization — which they have said has widened and deepened in the past several years -- has now suffered a regression resulting in the rise of a widespread chauvinistic and bourgeois-nationalist consciousness? These important questions are left unanswered. However, it is crucial that they be answered from the point of view of developing an orientation toward the consciousness of the masses of Canadians, and not just the already established left.

The other position is expressed clearly in the *Statement on the Draft Resolution on Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* (document number 18) submitted by Kent and myself, as well as in a number of other documents by us in this discussion. The statement reads, "...we think that this economic integration of Canada with the most powerful imperialist power in the world will extend and deepen responses within the ranks of the working class, which we have characterized as anti-U.S. imperialist and which we should now call nationalist — a nationalism which has been developing to an anti-capitalist consciousness."

The statement continues, "It is not reactionary. It is not opposed in its general thrust to Québécois nationalism for instance. We must identify with it in order to understand politics in Canada and in order to effectively propagandize our revolutionary socialist views and build the Trotskyist party.

"We reject the document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* because we consider that it essentially rejects the line of the document *Canada-U.S. Relations* which was adopted at our 1968 convention. We think that the 1968 document requires some changes and adjustments in the light of the important developments over the past four years, however, it is our opinion that it is one of the most precious achievements of our movement and it provides the only correct basis from which to move forward."

It is time to submit these positions to the test of experience, which in the end is the most important test of all. Has Canadian nationalism diverted Canadians, the Canadian left in particular, away from the class struggle? Or, has Canadian nationalism and opposition to U.S. domination brought class relations into sharper focus and posed the need for socialist solutions more clearly? Has Canadian nationalism brought people closer to the defense of the struggle of the Québécois and Indians for self-determination or has it taken them farther away? Has the wide-spread Canadian nationalism brought the so-called "confused and disoriented" Canadian left closer to some form of bourgeois ideology or has it taken it toward a working class ideology, that is Marxism?

Any serious movement has to answer these questions. Fortunately for our movement we have a test case which has developed before our eyes during the present discussion. This is the recent political and organizational development of the Waffle/MISC. We will discuss its recent evolution within the framework of the developments of its political analysis and orientation to Canadian society, its organizational growth, and the meaning and significance of its break from the NDP.

The *Labor Challenge* has already taken a position on the political orientation of the Waffle since its break from the NDP. As far back as October 9, 1972, in an article by Mark Gans it stated, "Unlike the Waffle, for example, it (the Left Caucus-D.L.) stresses the struggle for socialism rather than for independence, and it talks about class struggle rather than nationalism."

In its next issue on October 23, 1972, *Labor Challenge* becomes much more definitive. An article by Dick Fidler pictures Waffle/MISC *(Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada, to replace "Waffle" --ed.)* in full retreat from a series of principled class struggle positions it had previously held because of its Canadian nationalism. The article reads, "The MISC's contradictory position on Quebec flows from its Canadian nationalism. As long as MISC sees the fate of Canadian workers linked with the fate of the Canadian state, it must inevitably oppose any force such as Québécois independentism which threatens the political unity and integrity of that state."

Later in the article the writer states that "the Waffle/ MISC is opposed to class politics. It sees the main struggle as one for 'Canadian independence' — when growing numbers of workers are coming to understand that the main problem in Canada is its control by big business. The Waffle-MISC's retreat from class politics ...leads them inevitably to oppose the NDP." One can only conclude that the *Labor Challenge* felt at that time that MISC was moving unquestionably to the right, an unmistakeable validation of the prediction and orientation of the document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* which had just begun to be circulated within the ranks of the movement in a pre-convention discussion. *Labor Challenge* has not found it necessary to revise this evaluation of MISC.

However, *Labor Challenge's* line has held up very poorly in the light of experience.

Even while the article in the October 23, 1972 issues was being written, a book appeared on the market entitled *Corporate Canada*. It contained a very important introduction written by Mel Watkins. Watkins was the principle economist commissioned by the Liberal Government to write a report on the question of foreign domination of the Canadian economy. His findings and proposals were ignored by the government. In 1968 he became one of the key leaders of the Waffle within the NDP and its most well-known spokesman. The original statement around which the Waffle formed, the (")Waffle manifesto,(") was referred to as the Watkins manifesto when it first appeared. Watkins remains a key leader and public spokesman and personality for Waffle/MISC. Since he personifies and embodies the experience and evolution of Waffle, we will quote extensively from his introduction. He writes:

"The conventional economist, entrapped by the long shadow of Adam Smith, whom he has typically not read (and therefore blissfully unaware of the master's subtleties), believes two things about power. The first is that it is diffused through the market. Models of price determination under monopoly and ogligopoly (a few sellers with market power) he can discuss at length, but his basic faith remains unshaken. Otherwise he risks discovering political economy and finding most of his present skills obsolete. The second is that the state is potentially omnipotent and benevolent, a neutral entity able to intervene when the populace wills to correct any imbalance. Believe that, and you will never risk discovering political economy and understanding the reality of the capitalist state.

"...Liberalism has long had a tight grip in North America but never a total monopoly. There has always been some dissent to preserve our sanity, and recently it has been growing. As a mode of thinking and analysis, Marxism has survived at the intellectual periphery, and whatever its tendency to be vulgarized for sectarian purposes, it offers a clearly superior answer to liberalism on the question of where power lies. Contemporary Marxists see the giant corporation as the central institution of capitalism in its highest and imperialist phase. Since the great merger movement and cartelization of the late ninteenth century, competitive capitalism has given way to monopoly capitalism, and the corporation as capitalist has achieved market power not only through its ability to set prices, but more fundamentally through its ability to appropriate and allocate surplus by the ploughing back of earnings and superior access to finance capital, and to manipulate tastes and sustain demand through the sales effort.

"Marx himself offered a penetrating insight into the nature of the capitalist state which is difficult to improve upon in his famous observation: 'The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.' In hinterland areas, it is the owners, top managers and financiers of the foreign-based multinational corporations that are the contemporary ruling class. Where

power lies is mostly outside of Canada. (Hence a nationalism of the left is a legitimate means of transcending alienation and powerlessness).

"As a social democratic or left-liberal academic, Pierre Trudeau could relate, up to a point, to the desire of Canadians for more economic independence — as the last essay in this book *(Corporate Canada)* ("The Economic Domination of Canada" — D.L.) reminds us. But as leader of the Liberal Party and prime minister, he has learned from whence campaign funds come and where power lies. When Senator Stanbury tells us that ninety-five corporations bankroll the Liberal Party, you and I know the odds are that two out of three of them are foreign-controlled, and four out of five of those two-thirds American controlled. The Trudeau government having gutted tax reform and anti-monopoly legislation under pressure from the business community, we are not surprised when it emasculates even the modest proposals of the Gray report on foreign ownership.

Appointing Mr. Gray, a junior minister from a Windsor constituency, to deal with this delicate problem was not exactly taking risks, as the essay in this book on Ford *(Motors --ed.),* also as it happens of Windsor, makes clear. Perhaps you expected more from Mr. Trudeau after he got that self-proclaimed go-ahead for independence from Mr. Nixon last December? But that's not the only message he may be presumed to have got. "Mr. Trudeau arrived back in Ottawa at 1 p.m. on Monday. He met with President Nixon for more than two hours Monday afternoon and later the two men continued their talks at a 'working dinner' at the White House. Among the 35 guests at the dinner were Edward Cole president of General Motors Corp., and B.R. Dorsey, president of Gulf Oil Co." You didn't read that in Canadian newspapers, but you could have in the *Wall Street Journal* of December 8, 1971.

"....If the reader has borne with me this far, he -- or she, since you unlike academics, tend to come in both sexes -- is entitled to move on to the main course. Permit me only a final and more personal note. I like most in this book the opening piece on Eaton's (*Eaton's: An Irreverent History*--D.L.) For one thing, it would be indeed to miss the main chance if, in our new and proper concern about foreign capitalists in Canada, we failed to appreciate the seamier side of our own indigenous beast."

This important statement by perhaps the most influential figure on the left has yet to be mentioned or refered to by the *Labor Challenge*, or by the defenders of the P.C. document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.*

If the left in Canada has become "confused and disoriented" because of Canadian nationalism, then the most prominent figure in the left — we would expect — should be the most confused and disoriented person around. Yet Watkins, starting with his conviction that U.S. big business domination must be opposed, has ended up opposing capitalism from a Marxist point of view, by applying Marx's description of the nature of the state under capitalism. This is a big step forward for Watkins from his days as a liberal. It also marks a step ahead from the Waffle manifesto which did not speak in terms of the class character of the state. His identification with Marxism marks a big step forward for the left as a whole which we have every reason to welcome.

Has nationalism led him politically toward class collaboration, toward preservation of the capitalist state, and into the arms of the bourgeoisie(?) In fact, his Canadian nationalism has led him in the opposite direction, toward socialism and Marxism.

The Waffle-MISC as it is constituted today adheres to the same general ideas as Watkins. If anything, Watkins could be considered to be on the right of Waffle. Jim Laxer, who now shares the public limelight with Watkins as a spokesman of Waffle, considers himself a revolutionary. While Watkins believes socialism can be brought about gradually, Laxer considers that a revolution will be necessary. We can say that the whole of Waffle today, moving under the leadership of Watkins and Laxer, has become highly involved in a discussion of Marxism and Marxist concepts as they are applied to Canada.

The Evolution ofthe Waffle-MISC

Since the Waffle left the NDP and formed an independent organization, it has organized a number of meetings across Ontario. As well, it is carrying on a membership drive and putting out a paper, the *Ontario Waffle News* (the first issue is now out). The paper is being used mainly as an internal organ. The paper reports that the Waffle movement has organized groups in London, Brantford, St. Catherines, Kingston, Thunder Bay, Windsor, Ottawa, West Metro (Toronto), East Metro, and North Metro.

In Toronto, the Waffle has been surprisingly successful despite their modest aims and expectations. Last November and December, it carried a series of four educational meetings which discussed Socialism and Canadian Independence and which were attended by about 70 or 80 persons. By far their most successful undertaking has been their weekly 12-part series of educational classes this year on the Political Economy of Canada. The Waffle hoped to attract 100 to each class. 320 came to the first meeting. 260 paid $10 to register for the full 12-week course.

On top of this educational program, the Waffle is holding other public meetings, carrying on regular internal meetings and campaigning to obtain more members. Gathering from a number of reports on Waffle activities, the membership of Waffle in Ontario stands at around 600 and is growing at a rate of 100 per month.

The classes held in Toronto give us a good indication of Waffle's political direction provincially and nationally since the main core of Waffle leaders and activists are from Toronto. From the point of view of the left in general, the classes are on a fairly sophisticated level. The major presentations to the classes have been given by Wafflers who consider themselves to be Marxists. Jim Laxer, John Hutcheson, Melvin Watkins and Krista Maeots are among them. Significantly, Stanley Ryerson, for many years associated with the Communist Party and who has written a number of highly important books on Canadian history from a Marxist point of view, has become active in the Waffle's external educational work and its internal discussions.

One of the most important of the classes was given by Laxer on December 10, 1972. It was entitled "A Socialist Strategy for Canadian Independence". Because of Laxer's prominence in Waffle and the topic of this particular class, what he said is particularly helpful in ascertaining the present political viewpoint of the Waffle.

The class was reported in the *Labour Challenge*, although it has yet to mention the seven well-attended classes that have been held so far this year. Dick Fidler reported the meeting. As Fidler reports, Laxer placed the central class question in the fore. Fidler writes: **"Laxer began his speech with the observation that any socialist strategy must start with an understanding of the reality of the struggle between labor and capital, 'the central contradiction of all societies'. How were the workers — some 80 percent of the population in Canada, if all wage and salary earners and their families are included – going to come to power?"** *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

Fidler goes on to report that Laxer considers that Canada is a dependent country due to the uneven development of world capitalism and that the Canadian bourgeoisie is "locked into U.S. strategy such that no alliance between the working class and any section of the bourgeoisie is conceivable. **Laxer rejected any two-stage concept of the Canadian revolution and stated that "The goals of socialism and independence must be interrelated"** *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

Fidler continues in the article to report Laxer's prediction of a process of de-industrialization which Laxer sees happening due to the domination of Canada by US capital. Towards the end of the reporting section of the article (before Fidler begins to polemicize against Laxer) Fidler reports, both paraphrasing and directly quoting Laxer, **"Since the AFL-CIO bureaucrats are among the most fervent advocates of U.S. protectionism, it is 'very difficult indeed for Canadian workers to expect protection as long as**

they stay in American unions.' Canadian unions have now become a 'very important strategic question for the Canadian Left'" *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

What Fidler's article fails to report is Laxer's recognition of the unity of interests of the Canadian and American workers. This position, which was stated at the same meeting, is consistent with an international outlook on the class struggle. Laxer placed his advocacy of Canadian unions within this concept. He said the need for Canadian unions arises because the leadership of the American trade union movement is tied to the American state and ignores the interests of Canadian workers. This is far from a bourgeois nationalist view of trade unionism.

In the next paragraph Fidler parenthetically reports that MISC partisans do not apply the term "nationalist" to their politics but reserve it for the "petit-bourgeois nationalists" like members of the Committee for an Independent Canada. Apparently this information was gathered by Fidler in a personal conversation with Laxer. Since then, Laxer has stated the opposite. **At the same time the article appeared, the book *Corporate Canada* was appearing with the introduction by Watkins already referred to in this document. Here he referred to the legitimacy of a nationalism of the left as a means of transcending alienation and powerlessness. For Laxer there is no contradication between working in the nationalist milieu and being anti-imperialist** *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

Later Fidler reports that **Laxer calls for the defense of the right of the Québécois to self-determination including the fight against the intervention of the Canadian state against Quebec's right** *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

Lastly, Fidler reports that Laxer warned that "anti-imperialists should have no illusions about the class nature of the Canadian state — a repressive instrument of the ruling class, Laxer stated, although it is a 'class controlled by foreign capitalists'."

Fidler failed to report that Laxer, in a response to a question from the floor, said that Marxism was essential to an understanding of Canadian society. He was convinced of the need for a revolution which would undoubtedly be violent. He disagreed with Leninism, that is, with the formation of a disciplined vanguard party, and counterposed to it the formation of a broad anti-imperialist, socialist movement.

After attending the meeting and reporting what he did, one wonders what Fidler thinks of his previous article on the Waffle. In that article (already quoted), he wrote: "The MISC's contradictory position on Quebec flows from its Canadian nationalism. As long as MISC sees the fate of Canadian workers linked with the fate of the Canadian state, it must threaten the political unity and integrity of that state."

Since December 25, the Waffle has ceased to exist as far as *Labor Challenge* is concerned. Perhaps the editorial board proclaimed its death in a New Year's resolution.

However, as I have already mentioned, Waffle activities flourished at the beginning of 1973 and they continue to do so. The Toronto local of our movement projected sending substantial forces to intervene in the Waffle. Of course, our movement could not hope to accomplish anything by this effort, since we have been attempting to intervene in a movement that has developed under a nationalist umbrella while *(we in the LSA are)* carrying the banner of anti-nationalism, as demanded of us by the authors of *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism*." These comrades were not backed up by a single article evaluating the classes that were being given, attended by over 300 people each.

Most of the classes so far have developed themes set forth in early talks, specifically Laxer's presentation on Dec. 10. In the first talk in this series, Laxer outlined the basic conceptions that the educational classes are founded on. They, are: 1) productive relations determine social and cultural relationships; 2) the laws and the state maintain the existing capitalist productive relations; 3) the state is at the service of big-business; 4) history is basically a history of class struggle; and 5) Canadian society is

characterized by the clash of two fundamentally opposing classes, the working class and the capitalist class.

The classes are a major event for the left in Canada. They represent the first broad, open discussion of Marxism and its application to Canadian problems in many, many years. They are mainly attended by students and NDPers. About half of those attending are women. Similar classes are being held across Ontario. Waffle groups across Canada will probably pick them up.

The Waffle and the NDP

Was the formation of MISC "a retreat from class-struggle politics through the NDP" as *Labor Challenge* claimed in its Oct. 13, 1972 issue and has repeated on a number of occasions? Most Wafflers hold memberships in the NDP.

A valuable insight into the orientation of Waffle to the NDP is provided by a position paper submitted to an internal Waffle discussion by Dawn Aspinal, Len Choptiany, Danny Drache, John Lang, and Neil Keller. The position paper was entitled "THE WAFFLE AND THE NDP: Disappearing from Within". A number of excerpts from this paper reveal the thinking of the autnors:

"There is a big difference between working within the NDP and taking it over. Taking over the NDP would be a tremendous task. The CCF-NDP has a long history of reformist parliamentary politics and is most likely to be highly resistant to change in the direction of socialism and anti-imperialism. In terms of socialist politics the NDP is largely an empty shell. While it is well-organized in terms of running elections, it is totally divorced from other forms of political work."

"The attempt to take over the NDP leads to integration within the NDP structures. The only political way of relating to the NDP is by developing an overall, independent Waffle political strategy which will then provide criteria for deciding which NDP activities we support and how we relate to elections. Without this overall strategy, based on anti-imperialist and socialist politics, working from within the NDP will become disappearing from within."

This position is clearly a step toward the revolutionary approach to the NDP. It correctly projects the concept of an independent movement with a socialist program intervening in the NDP and not getting lost within it and co-opted.

The authors of the position paper conclude by saying: "WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

(") At this time pushing the Waffle deeper into electoral politics will merely further the process of disappearing from within. What are some of the alternatives?

-the Waffle does not have to leave the NDP, but it has to begin to learn to use the NDP to advance Waffle political objectives.

-an electoral strategy has to be developed which forms a coherent part of an overall political strategy developed by Wafflers. We think that five Waffle candidates, each representing a region in Canada would best accomplish the electoral strategy that we have outlined.

-more political development has to take place among Wafflers through study and discussion groups. These groups would also function as the basic unit for the discussion and formulation of Waffle policy. Leadership and political skills have to be developed throughout the membership, so political initiative can be taken by men and women alike, in areas outside electoral politics. -development of programmes based on anti-imperialist politics. More programmes like the resources campaign have to be undertaken.

-the Waffle has to further its analysis of the trade union question and develop a programme for an independent Canadian trade union movement."

Since most of the alternatives have already been implemented by the Waffle in Ontario, we can assume they represent the thinking of the Waffle as a whole.

It appears that the bulk of Waffle activists, including the key leadership after a three or four year experience within the NDP, came to the conclusion that the NDP was not the vehicle to bring about socialism in Canada. They concluded an alternative was necessary and set about constructing one. So far they have met with a widespread and growing response.

The Waffle's attempt to set up an independent socialist movement, apart from the NDP can in no way be considered "a retreat from class struggle politics through the NDP". At most, the Waffle can be criticized for not consistently carrying on the fight within the NDP against the brass while it was forming its own independent organization *(emphasis by the web Ed.)*

From our movement's point of view we had an opportunity to win some of these activists to our movement and possibly to establish the strength of our movement on a new and higher plane. Their move out of the NDP could have become a successful culmination of our generally correct approach to our NDP work over the past number of years since the formation of the Waffle.

Why did such a process not take place?

We should note that the main reason cannot be the lack of activity or experience in the NDP on our part. We have had considerable experience and impressive connections, yet we gained nothing from the move of the Waffle last fall. In fact, our influence and prestige among the elements which formerly formed the left in the NDP around the Waffle has diminished considerably as these elements have moved to the left and even toward Marxism.

The reason for our failure lies in our political orientation. During the time when the Waffle was moving to the left, breaking from the right wing brass of the NDP, drawing conclusions about the nature of the state, coming to Marxist conclusions, etc., our movement attacked it for moving to the right, embracing bourgeois nationalism, abandoning class struggle politics. Motivated by an incorrect political analysis (that which is now contained in *Canada and the Crisis of* http://_q.il/*World Imperialism.)* Our movement lost all hope of gaining anything substantial from a formation which was moving in a political direction toward us.

At the same time, our projection of joining the LSA/LSO, an independent revolutionary organization with a pan-Canadian, internationalist and class struggle program, could not be taken seriously by the main section of the Waffle. This is because we laid down the condition of their staying on in the NDP, a political party which the Waffle and our movement know will not bring about socialism in Canada. Our movement made a fetish out of its NDP orientation. By doing so we lost a key opportunity to build our movement.

Only a handful of former Waffle activists, now in the Red Circle, made a gesture to join our movement. These people, under the influence of the Fourth International 9th World Congress Latin American line, have veered off in an ultra-leftist direction.

It is obvious that the Waffle, far from flying into the arms of the bourgeoisie, is moving to the left, drawing correct conclusions about the nature of the capitalist state in particular, and extending its influence, including its influence in the NDP.

Any attempt to apply the orientation of the document *Canada and the Crisis Of World Imperialism* to our work in the Waffle would be totally out of place, mainly because there is no need for a campaign to direct them as nationalists against the Canadian bourgeoisie since they already have an essentially correct concept

of the class struggle in this country and at this time appear to be constantly sharpening this understanding. Any attempt to work out our intervention in the Waffle based on the line developed by the *Labor Challenge* over the last year will be futile simply because *Labor Challenge* has a notion of the Waffle that is completely apart from what exists in real life.

Little wonder our attempt to intervene in Toronto in the important classes and meetings taking place has produced nothing. In fact, we have stopped seriously orienting to them.

There is nothing so persuasive as experience. The Waffle experience certainly indicates the bankruptcy of the orientation and line of the document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism* and the need for our movement to reject it.

In general, the attempt by our movement to evaluate the Waffle experience has been blocked by comrades who support the document *Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism,* blowing up out of all proportion various incidental statements by such persons as Laxer and Watkins. This method gets us nowhere. If our movement wished to, we could find all kinds of things wrong with other left political organizations, including ourselves. However, from the point of view of assessing where a political formation is going, we must be able to stand back and see it in its broad outlines and its place in the radicalization and to analyse its present stage of development relative to its past. What should be looked at with regard to Waffle is its essential direction.